

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT



Application No. 15388 of Howard University, as amended, pursuant to 11 DCMR 3108.1, for a special exception under Section 211 for further processing under an approved campus plan to construct an accessory parking structure for a University Hospital in an R-4 District at premises 400 V Street, N.W. (Square 3080, Lots 832 and 834).

HEARING DATE: November 28, 1990  
DECISION DATE: December 5, 1990

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

1. The subject property is located on the Howard University Campus which is generally bounded by Columbia Road to the north, 4th Street to the east, U and V Streets to the south, and Georgia, Sherman and Florida Avenues to the west. The campus includes property located in the R-4, R-5-B, R-5-D, SP-2, C-2-A, C-M-1, C-M-2 and C-M-3 zoned districts. The subject property is bounded by 5th Street to the west, V Street to the north, 4th Street to the east and Oakdale Place to the south and is known as premises 400 V Street, N.W. It is zoned R-4.

2. The applicant is seeking a special exception for further processing under an approved campus plan to allow for the construction of a parking garage to serve staff and outpatients of the Howard University Hospital. The general location and size of the proposed parking garage corresponds to the information contained in the 1988 Central Campus Plan for Howard University.

3. Section 211 of the Zoning Regulations provides that a college or university which is an academic institution of higher learning, including a college or university hospital, dormitory, fraternity or sorority house proposed to be located on the campus of a college or university, is permitted as a special exception in a residential district, provided that:

- a. Such use is so located that it is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students or other objectionable conditions;
- b. In R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5-A and R-5-B Districts, the maximum bulk requirements normally applicable in such districts may be increased for specific buildings or structures provided the total bulk of all buildings and structures on the campus shall not exceed the gross floor area prescribed for the R-5-B District;

- c. The applicant shall submit to the Board a plan for developing the campus as a whole, showing the present location, height and bulk, where appropriate, of all present and proposed improvements, including, but not limited to buildings, parking and loading facilities, and a description of all activities conducted or to be conducted therein, and of the capacity of all present and proposed campus development;
- d. Within a reasonable distance of the college or university campus, the Board may also permit the interim use of land or improved property with any use which the Board may determine as a proper college or university function; and
- e. Before taking final action on an application for such use, the Board shall have submitted the application to the District of Columbia Office of Planning and the District of Columbia Department of Public Works for review and report.

4. This request for special exception is submitted pursuant to the 1988 Central Campus Plan for Howard University reviewed and approved by the Board in BZA Application No. 14733, dated December 23, 1988.

5. Howard University's Central Campus is located in an urban setting composed of residential, commercial, industrial and institution uses, generally centered at Georgia Avenue and Howard Place. The LeDroit Park Historic District borders the campus to the south. The site which is the subject of this application is located approximately one block east of the Howard University Hospital.

6. The subject site is currently unimproved and consists of two lots which occupy the entire Square 3080. The site has a total lot area of 43,470 square feet.

7. The location of the proposed parking garage was thoroughly addressed during the planning and public hearing process leading to the approval of the 1988 Central Campus Plan. In 1981, the applicant had entered into an agreement with the LeDroit Park Community to establish a park at 5th Street and Oakdale Place. Over the years the maintenance of the site as open space became a burden upon the applicant due to the intensive efforts required to keep the site free of trash and debris and to keep the site secure. By the time that the applicant prepared its 1988 Campus Plan, the University's need for on-site parking had increased substantially. In its approval of the 1988 campus plan, the Board found that parking on the subject site was justified by the University's need

for additional off-street parking spaces. The Board further found that the proposed location of the parking garage would minimize the walking distance and security risks for hospital staff and patients using the proposed facility.

8. The proposed parking garage is described in the approved 1988 Central Campus Plan as a 3-story, 210,000 square foot, 600-space parking structure to serve primarily persons receiving out-patient services at the Tower, the Howard University Hospital, and the Cancer Research Center. The parking garage, as currently proposed, differs slightly from the structure described in the 1988 Central Campus Plan. The University now proposes to construct a 159,072 square foot parking garage to accommodate 593 cars. Approximately, 50,928 square feet of space below grade and seven parking spaces were eliminated when borings revealed a higher than anticipated water table. The proposed structure is three-stories with six parking levels, four above grade to include a roof top level, and two below grade. The garage has been designed so that automobiles parked on the roof cannot be seen from grade level. The height of the structure is 37 feet measured from grade to the highest point of the parapet. The garage will be served by two elevators.

9. The proposed 593 vehicle capacity of the facility includes 457 full size parking spaces, 136 compact sized parking spaces and 24 handicapped designated parking spaces. The parking garage is completely accessible to handicapped persons.

10. Each vehicular entrance to and exit from the proposed garage is at least 40 feet from the nearest intersection as measured from the intersection of the curb lines extended; and each entrance and exit is completely accessible. One entrance and exit will be reserved for automobiles of hospital employees, and a separate entrance and exit will be for automobiles of students and visitors of Hospital patients.

11. The FAR of all approved university buildings located in residential zones on the University's Central Campus will be less than 1.8 when the proposed parking garage is constructed.

12. The proposed parking garage is needed primarily to address a severe shortage of on-site parking spaces for employees and patients of Howard University Hospital, including Phases I and II of the Tower, and persons receiving out-patient services and visiting at these facilities.

13. The Tower - Phase I houses the Hospital's Magnetic Resonance Imaging System and the CATSCAN. When completed, Tower, Phase II will house administrative offices, private physicians offices, an in-and-out suite, the renal dialysis unit, clinics, and X-ray and clinical laboratory services. Tower - Phase I was

occupied in December 1988. Tower - Phase II is scheduled to open in the Spring of 1991. The construction of the Tower displaced parking for 217 automobiles.

14. The University currently has a waiting list of over 200 hospital and support staff persons who are unable to secure parking on the Hospital grounds, despite the operation of Parking Garage No. 1 east of the site and despite the fact that the hospital leases space for approximately 207 hospital staff persons. Only 154 parking spaces are available to visitors to the Hospital; at least 120 additional spaces are needed.

15. In response to community requests, parking also will be made available to students in Carver Hall and Slowe Hall Dormitories located east of 4th Street. These dormitories are located in residential neighborhoods and the students are now forced to use local residential streets to park their cars. In its comments on the 1988 Central Campus Plan, ANC-1B urged the Board to require the University to relieve parking problems around Slowe and Carver Halls. The proposed construction of the parking garage is responsive to that request.

16. The proposed parking garage has been designed so as to be compatible with the surrounding residential area. To minimize the impact of the structure on the two-and three story houses in the LeDroit Park Historic District to the south, two levels of the parking garage have been lowered into the ground. The facade of the south and east elevations of the parking garage is brick, similar in appearance to the brick facades of houses on Oakdale Street. The west and north elevations are of precast concrete with brick trim in keeping with the facade of Parking Garage No. 1 at 5th and V Streets. The openings on the south elevation, that provide required ventilation for the parking garage, are similar in scale and design to the doors and windows of the residences on Oakdale Street.

17. Foliage has been planned to present an attractive environment and smooth transition from the University to the community. Trees, shrubs and ground cover have been selected to enforce the residential ambiance expressed in the building's design.

18. All entrances and exits are located on V Street; the location furthest removed from the residential community. Moreover, V Street is a one-way street that directs traffic westward away from the residential areas east of the site.

19. A traffic analysis prepared on behalf of the University of the area generally bounded by Second Street to the east, U Street to the south, Sixth Street to the west and W Street to the north, revealed that 30 to 40 percent of vehicles parked in the

area were parked in violation of parking restrictions. The proposed 593 parking spaces would accommodate all of the illegally parked vehicles with 336 spaces remaining to serve other parking needs of the Hospital, Tower and University students.

20. The construction of the proposed garage will relieve the congested parking situation in the nearby LeDroit Park and Bloomingdale neighborhoods by centralizing parking for the Tower and Hospital, making parking available to students in Carver Hall and Slowe Hall and providing alternative spaces for vehicles that currently abuse neighborhood parking restrictions. The field studies and analysis performed as a part of the study of traffic conditions in the area indicate that the proposed parking garage will have no adverse impact on traffic conditions in the vicinity of the site.

21. The Office of Planning (OP), by memorandum dated November 21, 1999, recommended that the application be approved. The OP was of the opinion that the proposed facility would not have a negative impact on the adjacent residential neighborhood. The OP was further of the opinion that the proposed facility would help relieve the existing negative parking conditions in the area and would be an asset to the University and the community. No other D.C. agency reports were submitted.

22. The Board waived its seven day filing requirement to accept the written recommendation of ANC 1B. Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 1B), by letter dated November 26, 1990 and by representative at the public hearing, supported the granting of the application generally based on the following:

- a. The proposed facility will help to ameliorate the existing problem with overflow University-related parking in the surrounding residential areas.
- b. The facility will have little impact on the neighborhood in terms of pollution from automobile emissions due to the proposed underground parking, ventilation systems, and traffic disbursement throughout the day.
- c. The design, height, and building materials of the facility blend in with the surrounding University projects and residential community.
- d. The project substantially complies with the 1988 Central Campus Plan adopted by the Board.

23. A representative of the LeDroit Park Civic Association testified at the public hearing in opposition to the application. The opposition was of the opinion that the applicant should locate

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the proposed parking elsewhere on the campus and maintain the subject site for open space.

**CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND OPINION:**


Based on the foregoing findings of fact and the evidence of record, the Board concludes that the applicant is seeking special exception relief, the granting of which requires compliance with the requirements of Sections 211 and 3108.1 of the Zoning Regulations and that the requested relief can be granted as in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and that it will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property. The Board concludes that the University has met its burden of proof and that the use is so located as to not likely to become objectionable because of noise, traffic, number of students or other objectionable conditions.

The Board further concludes that, as hereinafter conditioned, the project is not likely to adversely impact adjacent or nearby properties. Accordingly, it is hereby **ORDERED** that the application is **GRANTED, SUBJECT** to the **CONDITION** that landscaping and construction shall be in accordance with the revised plans marked as Exhibit No. 27A of the record.

VOTE: 4-0 (Charles R. Norris, Sheri M. Pruitt and Carrie L. Thornhill to grant; Maybelle Taylor Bennett to grant by proxy; Paula L. Jewell not voting, having recused herself).

BY ORDER OF THE D.C. BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

ATTESTED BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
EDWARD L. CURRY  
Executive Director

FINAL DATE OF ORDER: \_\_\_\_\_

SEP 27 1991

PURSUANT TO D.C. CODE SEC. 1-2531 (1987), SECTION 267 OF D.C. LAW 2-38, THE HUMAN RIGHT ACT OF 1977, THE APPLICANT IS REQUIRED TO COMPLY FULLY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF D.C. LAW 2-38, AS AMENDED, CODIFIED AS D.C. CODE, TITLE 1, CHAPTER 25 (1987), AND THIS ORDER IS CONDITIONED UPON FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THOSE PROVISIONS. THE FAILURE OR REFUSAL OF APPLICANT TO COMPLY WITH ANY PROVISIONS OF D.C. LAW 2-38, AS AMENDED, SHALL BE A PROPER BASIS FOR THE REVOCATION OF THIS ORDER.

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UNDER 11 DCMR 3103.1, "NO DECISION OR ORDER OF THE BOARD SHALL TAKE EFFECT UNTIL TEN DAYS AFTER HAVING BECOME FINAL PURSUANT TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE BEFORE THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT."

THIS ORDER OF THE BOARD IS VALID FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDER, UNLESS WITHIN SUCH PERIOD AN APPLICATION FOR A BUILDING PERMIT OR CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY IS FILED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS.

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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT



APPLICATION/APPEAL NO. 15388

As Executive Director of the Board of Zoning Adjustment Adjustment, I hereby certify and attest to the fact that a copy of the Order in this application/appeal dated SEP 27 1991 has been mailed postage prepaid to each party who appeared and participated in the public hearing concerning this matter, and who is listed below:


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